Coordinates: 51°20′15″N 12°23′18″E

Grassi Museum

The **Grassi Museum** is a building complex in Leipzig, Germany, home to three museums: the Ethnography Museum, Musical Instruments Museum, and Applied Arts Museum.

It is sometimes known as the "Museums in the Grassi", or as the "New" Grassi Museum (to distinguish it from the older building with this name, now home to the municipal library).

Entrance to the Grassi Museum.

Courtyard.

Second courtyard.

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Origins

The museum is named after Franz Dominic Grassi, a Leipzig businessman of Italian descent, who bequeathed over two million marks to the city upon his death in 1880.[1] This helped pay for a number of new constructions, including the Gewandhaus and the Mende Fountain, as well as the "Old Grassi Museum". Built from 1892-95 on the Königsplatz (now Wilhelm-Leuschner-Platz), this originally housed the Museum of Ethnography and the Museum of Arts and Crafts, and is now the municipal library.

New building

The old museum became too small for the collections, prompting its director to call for an architecture competition to design a new building, to be paid for with the Grassi bequest. The winning firm designed a building with elements of New Objectivity and Art Deco, based around several courtyards. It was built from 1925-29 (one of the few new museums of the Weimar Era), on the site of the old Johannis Hospital. The urban planner Hubert Ritter had intended for it to be the starting point of an eastward expansion of the city. It contained originally the Johannis Church, demolished in 1963.[2]

The New Grassi Museum was severely bombed in 1943,[2] with the loss of tens of thousands of items. Rebuilding began in 1947, with the first exhibitions in 1954. It was closed from 1981-85 due to a problem with the heating system.[3] It was completely renovated from 2001-05, including the removal of some of the front windows. It reopened partly in 2005, though the Museum of Applied Arts did not reopen until 2007.[2]

It is a historically preserved building, and is one of around 20 so-called "Cultural Lighthouses" in the German government's Blue Book of culturally significant sites in the former East Germany. As such, it is a member of the Konferenz Nationaler Kultureinrichtungen.[4]

Trade fair

The Grassi Museum hosts an annual trade fair in October, the Grassimesse, whose origins go back to 1920.[2]

Notes

1. Leipzigs "Grassi" erwacht in neuem Glanz (https://www.welt.de/kultur/article1423527/Leipzigs_Grassi_erwacht_in_neuem_Glanz.html) Dankwart Guratzsch, *Die Welt*, 3 December 2007. Retrieved 5 September 2010. (in German)
2. Aus der Versenkung ans Licht: Eröffnung des Grassi-Museums für angewandte Kunst in Leipzig (http://www.nzz.ch/nachrichten/kultur/aktuell/aus_der_versenkung_ans_licht_1.592267.html) Hubertus Adam, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 1 December 2007. Retrieved 5 September 2010. (in German)
3. Geschichte des Museums für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig (http://www.mvl-grassimuseum.de/index.php?id=22) History of the Ethnography Museum. (in German)
4. Kultur in Leipzig und Naumburg (http://www.bundesregierung.de/nn_23394/Content/DE/Archiv16/Artikel/2008/09/2008-09-04-kultur-leipzig-naumburg.html) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20110926232212/http://www.bundesregierung.de/nn_23394/Content/DE/Archiv16/Artikel/2008/09/2008-09-04-kultur-leipzig-naumburg.html) 2011-09-26 at the Wayback Machine German government, 4 September 2008. Retrieved 5 September 2010. (in German)

External links

- The Grassi Museum (http://www.grassimuseum.de)
- The Grassimesse (http://www.grassimesse.de/130.0.html?&L=2)
- Grassi-Museum: Der ganze Reichtum unseres Kontinents (https://www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/kunst/grassi-museum-der-ganze-reichtum-unseres-kontinents-1494088.html) Andreas Platthaus, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 30 November 2007. Retrieved 10 October 2010. (in German)
- Akrobaten, Drachen und Pagoden: Die Chinoiserien in Leipzigs Grassimuseum (http://www.monumente-online.de/07/06/streiflichter/08_Leipzig_Grassi_Museum.php) Carola Nathan, *Monumente-Online*, June 2007. Retrieved 5 September 2010. (in German)

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